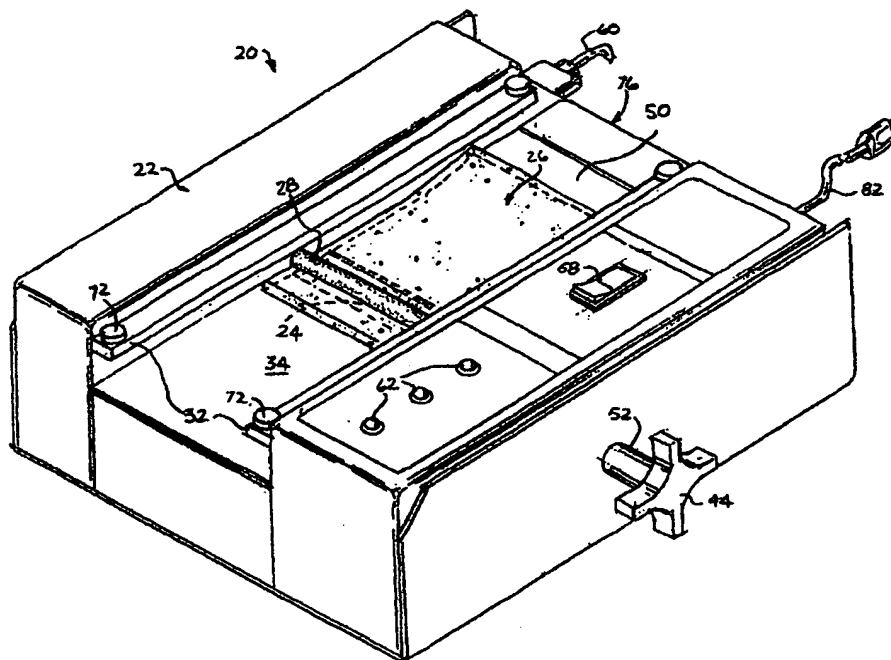




INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification ⁶ : B41J 2/32, 2/232	A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 00/21758 (43) International Publication Date: 20 April 2000 (20.04.00)
(21) International Application Number: PCT/US99/24147 (22) International Filing Date: 15 October 1999 (15.10.99) (30) Priority Data: 60/104,650 15 October 1998 (15.10.98) US (71) Applicant: IDENTITY GROUP, INC. [US/US]; 1480 Gould Drive, Cookeville, TN 38506 (US). (72) Inventors: VENKATARAMAN, Ravi; 1763 Timber Trail, Cookeville, TN 38506 (US). MORGAN, Paul; 670 Clark Avenue, Cookeville, TN 38501 (US). MOSS, Russell; 720 Friar Tuck Lane, Cookeville, TN 38501 (US). (74) Agent: MILLER, Raymond, A.; Reed Smith Shaw & McClay LLP, P.O. Box 488, Pittsburgh, PA 15230-0488 (US).		(81) Designated States: AE, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG). Published <i>With international search report.</i> <i>Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of the receipt of amendments.</i>

(54) Title: PRINTER AND METHOD OF USING SAME TO PRINT ON THERMOPLASTIC MEDIUM



(57) Abstract

The present invention is directed to a thermal printer (20) and a method for using the printer (20) for printing on thermoplastic foam (26) to form a relief image which is comprised of open cells in the area that is the transfer ink enclosed or sealed cells which is to be impermeable to ink or other print medium. More particularly, the present invention relates to a printer (20) having a thermal head (24) or thermal imaging means and method of using the printer (20) to form an image on a thermoplastic foam (26), the image being comprised of a relief image of open cells and a background image of closed cells.